



**SURVEY OF DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY AND EXPERIENCE
IN LEGACY HOUSING ON DOLLIS VALLEY**



DOLLIS VALLEY: SURVEY OF DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY IN LEGACY HOUSING

OBJECTIVES OF THE SURVEY

(a) Gather, collate and analyse the following information:

- Residents' overall digital experience
- Specifics about connectivity and service reliability
- Specifics about how residents use and / or rely on digital connectivity
- Enquire about barriers to more or better use of digital services

(b) Provide empirical data which can be sent to London Borough of Barnet and providers to:

- Show the level of digital exclusion that residents experience
- Quantify residents' level of frustration with their digital experience
- Quantify the level of need which justifies improving the digital experience for residents
- From feedback taken, assess how a good digital experience would benefit residents



- Confirm lack of high-speed fibre in the area
- Confirm poor mobile telephone reception in the area

(c) Promote the availability of fast, community Wifi connection at Hope Corner, which is provided free to residents

DOLLIS VALLEY: SURVEY OF DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY IN LEGACY HOUSING



SURVEY COVERAGE

The survey was conducted in four phases, targeting the roads with legacy housing which fall outside of the redevelopment area (see map on next page).

In total, 513 houses were visited, over a period of three months. The Survey Team had interactions with 228 residents, 233 residents were either out or did not answer the door and 52 residents were inaccessible due to security measures on their blocks of flats.

Mays Lane was not surveyed because fibre has been laid and is available to residents. Barnet Lane is outside the estate area.

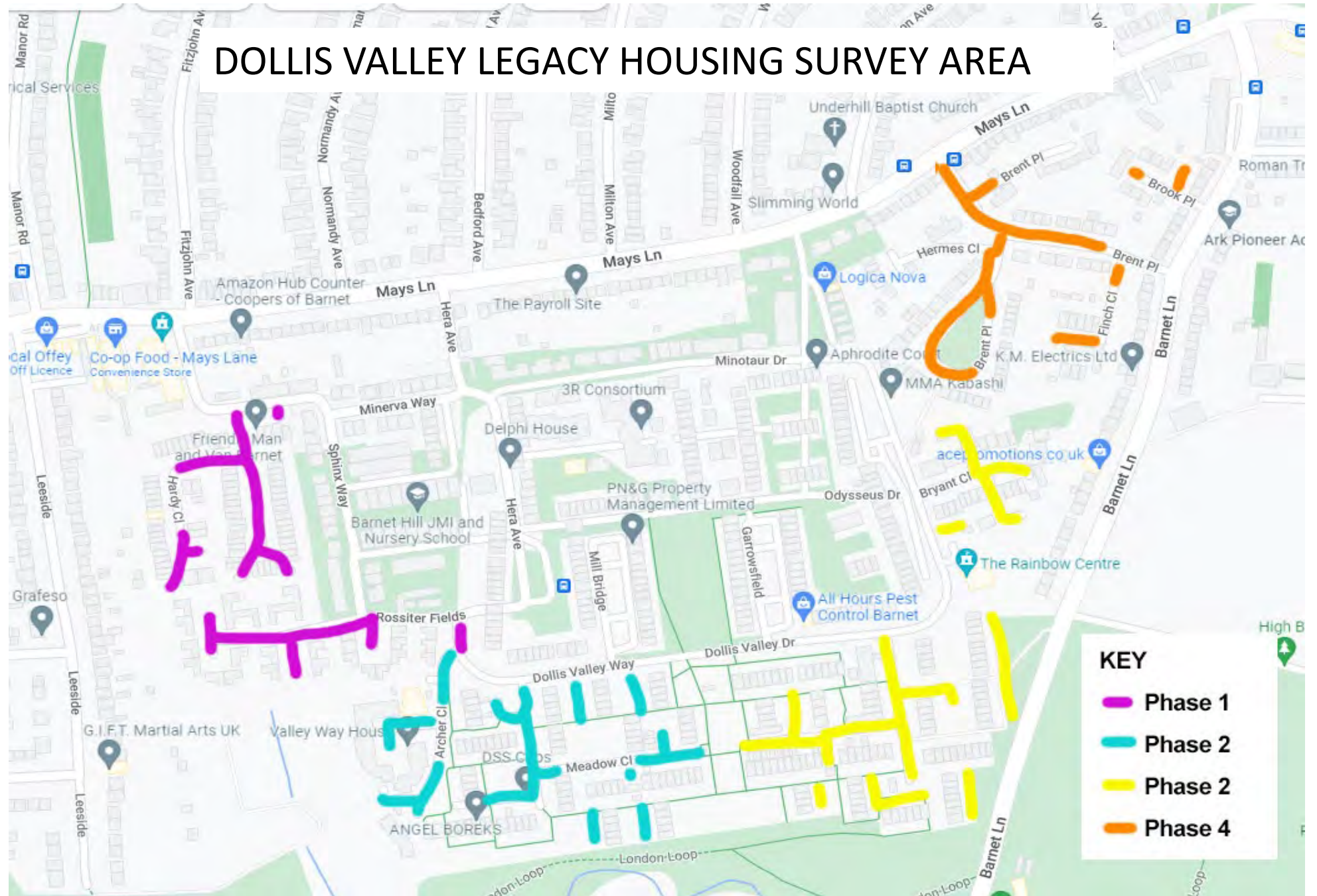
Note: New houses in the redevelopment area appear to be on legacy telecommunications infrastructure. The developer / housing association have not confirmed whether new fibre has been or is due to be laid. The new houses are outside the remit of the survey because issues with connectivity should be addressed by the Dollis Valley Partnership Board (made up of stakeholders and residents), which is responsible for the redevelopment.

SURVEY AREA

Roads with legacy housing which are not being redeveloped are:

- Hammond Close
- Eastham Close
- Hardy Close
- Rossiter Fields
- Meadow Close
- Crocus Field
- Archer Close
- Pellow Close
- Bryant Close
- Brent Close
- Brook Close
- Finch Close

DOLLIS VALLEY LEGACY HOUSING SURVEY AREA



SURVEYING LOGISTICS: DATA COLLECTION

Hope Corner put together a Survey Team which consisted of staff and volunteers. To keep the team safe, the Survey Team was split into pairs when going door-to-door. No one operated on their own. They were equipped with ID (in the form of a badge) and identified themselves clearly to residents as they went about collecting the data.

A script was used when interacting with residents (see below). One person in the pair asked the questions while the other wrote down the responses on a templated sheet. See next page for the list of questions asked. If the resident had Broadband, questions 1 to 7 were asked. Those with no Broadband were asked questions 1, 5 to 7.

“Hello. My name is..... (SHOW ID CARD)

I work at Hope Corner Community Centre in Mays Lane.

We are conducting a survey at Hope Corner regarding the digital experience in your road. We are doing this because we believe residents may be excluded from digital services.

Please may I take just a few minutes of your time to ask you a few questions?”

If they answer “no”, say:

“Thank you for your time. Can I leave you a leaflet about our centre. You’re welcome to pop in.”



SURVEYING LOGISTICS: QUESTIONS ASKED

Q1. How do you connect? Broadband Mobile Cable None *(select from list)*

Q2. Who is your provider?

Q3. How would you rate your digital experience? *(score out of five)*

- 1 – Very poor *(Rarely connected; Carrier drops often; No streaming; Downloads very slow; No upload speed)*
- 2 – Poor *(Connection is sporadic; Carrier sometimes drops; Buffering most of time; Downloads slow; No upload speed)*
- 3 – Neither good nor poor *(Connection fair; Carrier OK; Buffering frequent at peak times; Download speed fair; Uploads very slow)*
- 4 – Good *(Mostly connected; Occasional buffering at peak times; Response times OK; Downloads good; Uploads slow)*
- 5 – Very good *(Always connected; Perfect streaming; Quick response times; Quick downloads and uploads)*

Q4. Main usage? Work Learning Entertainment Shopping
(select from list) News Social Communication Finance / Legal
 Leisure TV

Q5. How would better connectivity affect your life?

Q6. Would you use a local community centre to connect if it had free Wifi? *(mention free Wifi at Hope Corner)*

Q7. Other than connectivity, is there anything that stops you from using digital services? *(e.g. Equipment? Training? Cost?)*

SURVEYING LOGISTICS: ABSENT & UNINTERESTED RESIDENTS

If the Survey Team pairs were unable to get a response from the resident when they knocked on the door, they posted a “Sorry we missed you today” flyer (see below), together with an A4-folded guide to Hope Corner Community Centre (see right).

The Survey Team also encountered residents who were uninterested in contributing to the survey. The team apologised for disturbing them and, where possible, handed them the A4-folded guide to Hope Corner Community Centre.



Opening hours:
Monday to Friday

Café
9.30am - 2.00pm

Community Support
Drop-in

9.30am - 2.00pm

3.30pm - 5.00pm
(appointments)

*Reflecting God's love in the
Mays Lane area*



Hope Corner Community Centre
185 Mays Lane, Barnet, EN5 2DY
Tel: 020 8364 8756
Email: hopecorner@outlook.com
Website: hope-corner.org.uk



Sorry we missed you today

We are conducting a survey at Hope Corner Community in Mays Lane regarding the digital in your area. We are doing this because we believe residents may be excluded from digital services.

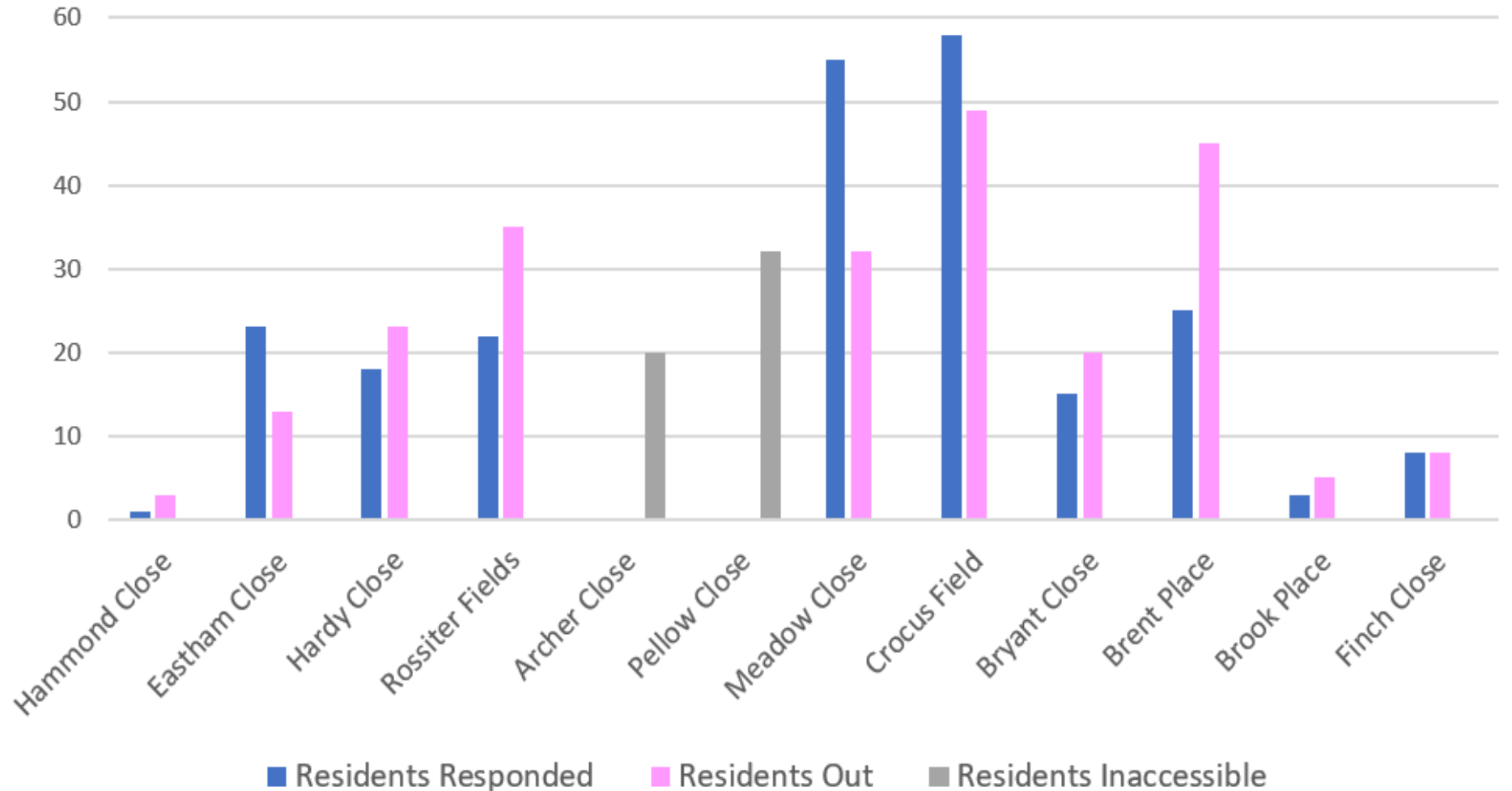
If you are able to help us, please call Janet, manager at Hope Corner, on 020 8364 8756 or pop into the centre. We would love to hear from you.

SURVEY RESPONSE: NUMBER OF RESPONSES v NUMBER OF ABSENT RESIDENTS

The Survey Team found a larger proportion of residents were out in most roads, except Eastham Close, Meadow Close and Crocus Field.

Residents in Archer Close and Pellow Close were inaccessible due to security doors on the entrances to the blocks of flats. However, the team managed to leave the “Sorry we missed you” flyer and the A4-folded guide to Hope Corner Community Centre in external letterboxes.

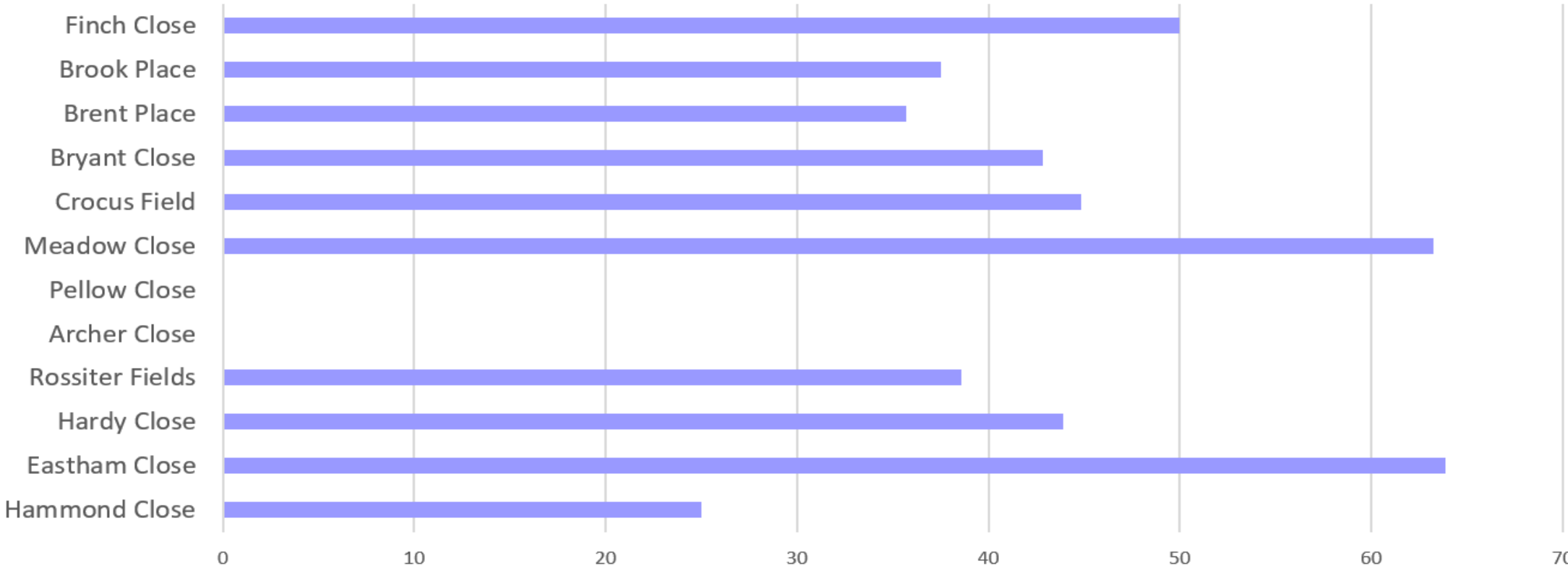
DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
NUMBER OF RESPONSES (BY ROAD)



SURVEY RESPONSE: PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WHERE RESIDENTS RESPONDED

The Survey Team found 50% or more of residents in Meadow Close, Finch Close and Eastham Close residents were willing to participate in the survey. Three other roads had response rates of more than 40% while a further three had a response rate of more than 30%.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS SURVEYED WHERE WE INTERACTED WITH RESIDENTS



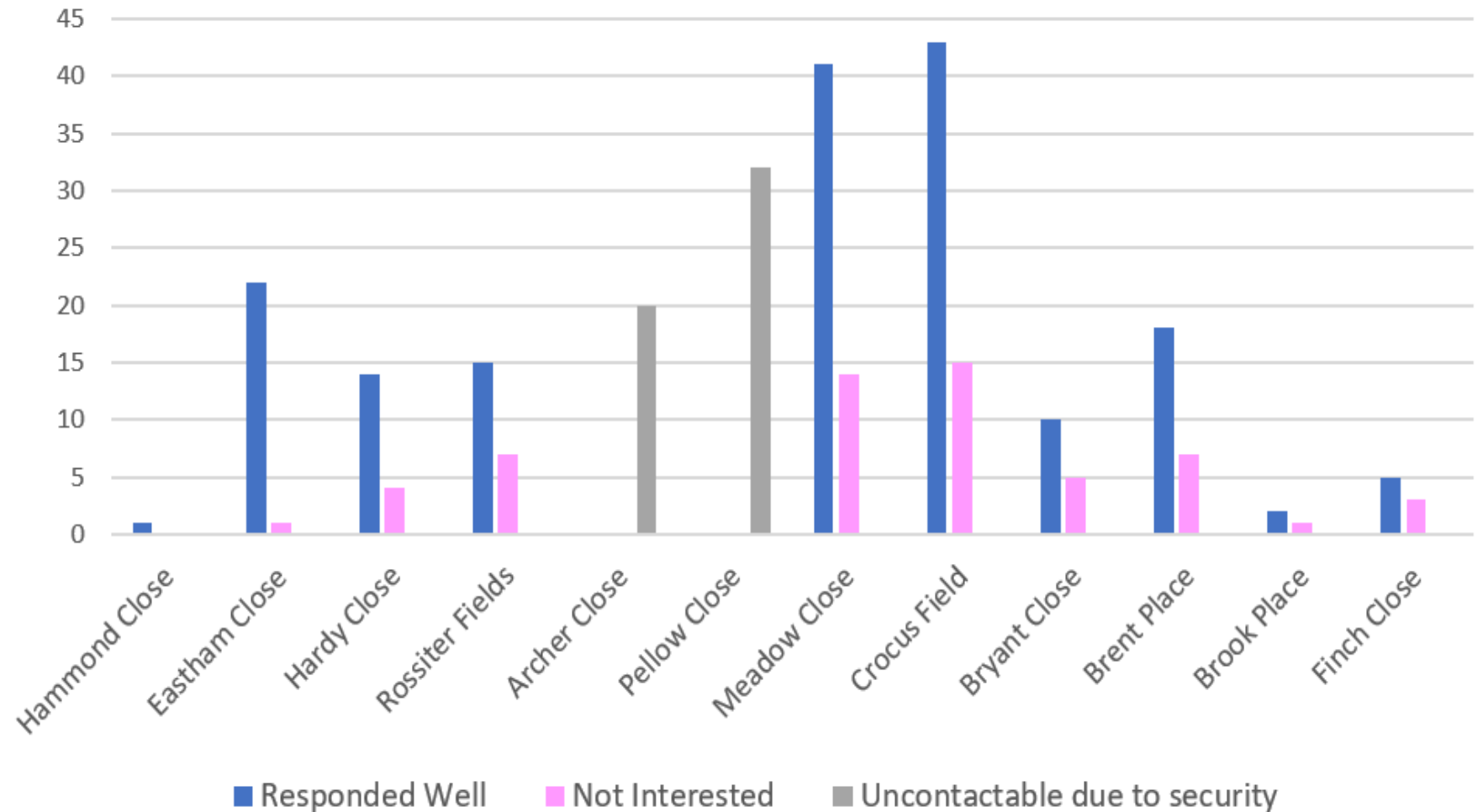
SURVEY RESPONSE: TYPE OF RESPONSE

Of those residents who engaged with the Survey Team, a large proportion of residents responded well to questioning and were willing to give information.

Resistance rates, i.e. those residents not interested in engaging, were a in minority in most roads, except where there were fewer houses, such as Finch Close and Bryant Close.

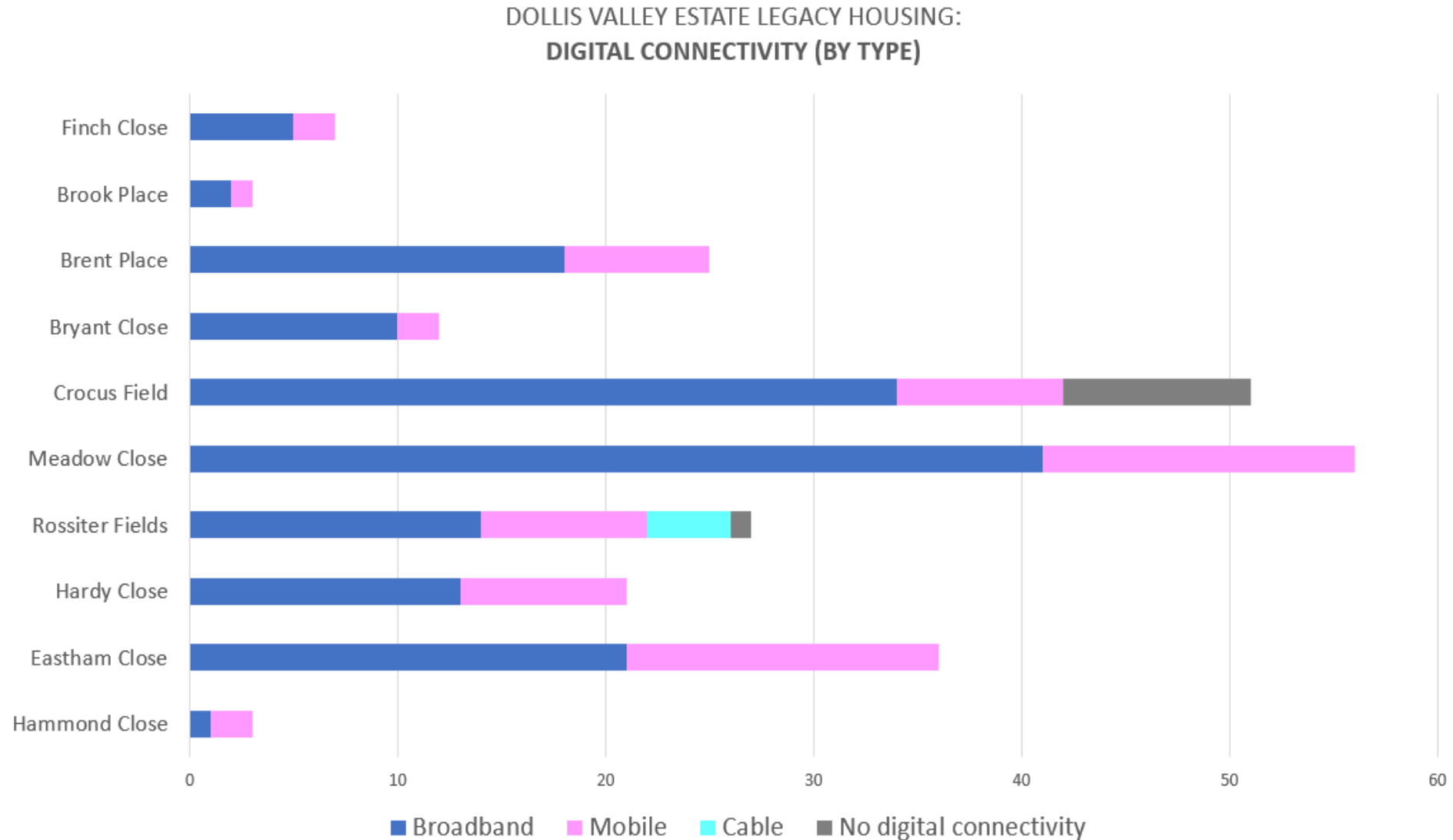
The one exception to this was Rossiter Fields, where the majority of residents were either out or were unwilling to interact with the team.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING: TYPE OF RESPONSE (BY ROAD)



SURVEY RESULTS: TYPE OF DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

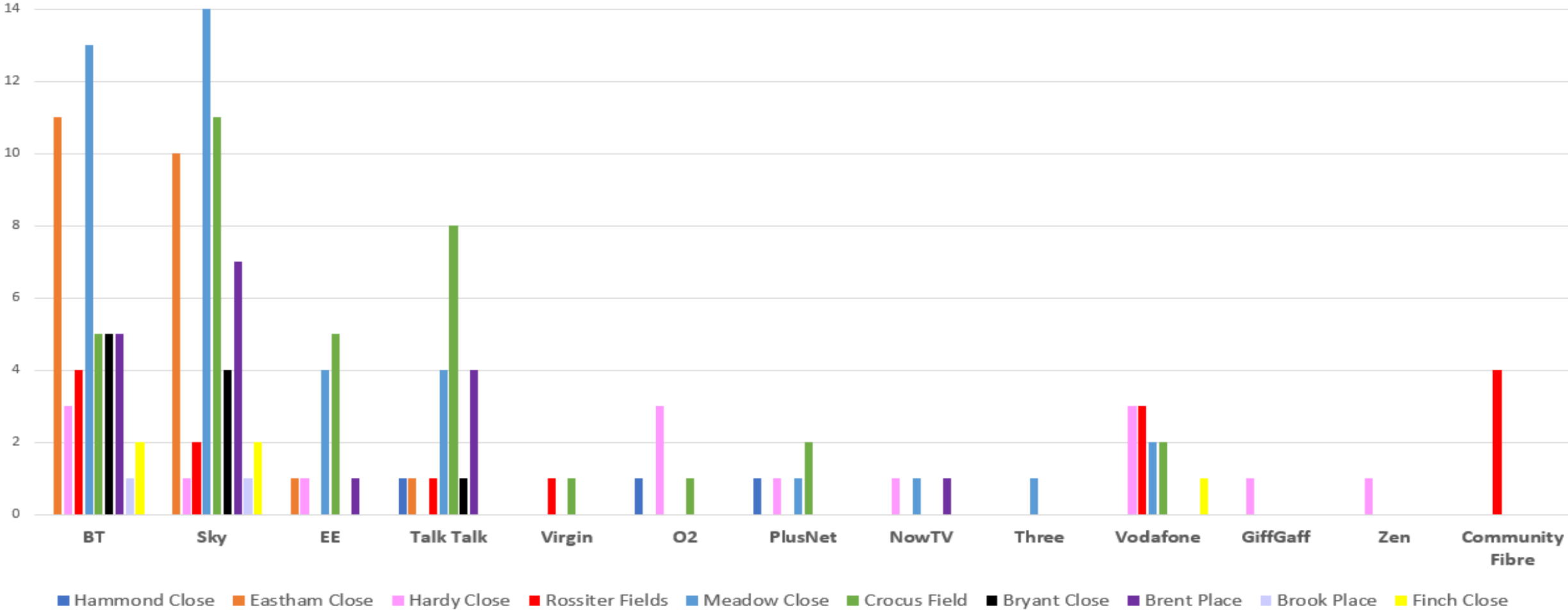
Most residents reported they had Broadband connectivity. A quarter of residents who responded said they had mobile as well. Only a few had no Broadband but connected by mobile only. Residents in Rossiter Fields and Crocus fields were the only ones to report that they had no digital connectivity. Rossiter Fields was also the only road to have cable (high-speed fibre).



SURVEY RESULTS: TYPE OF DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

There 13 different providers of Broadband, with Sky and BT by far the biggest suppliers across most roads. TalkTalk was the next largest, particularly in Crocus Field. Community Fibre was only cable supplier and limited to Rossiter Fields.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS - CONNECTIVITY BY ROAD



SURVEY RESULTS: PROVIDER SHARE OF DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

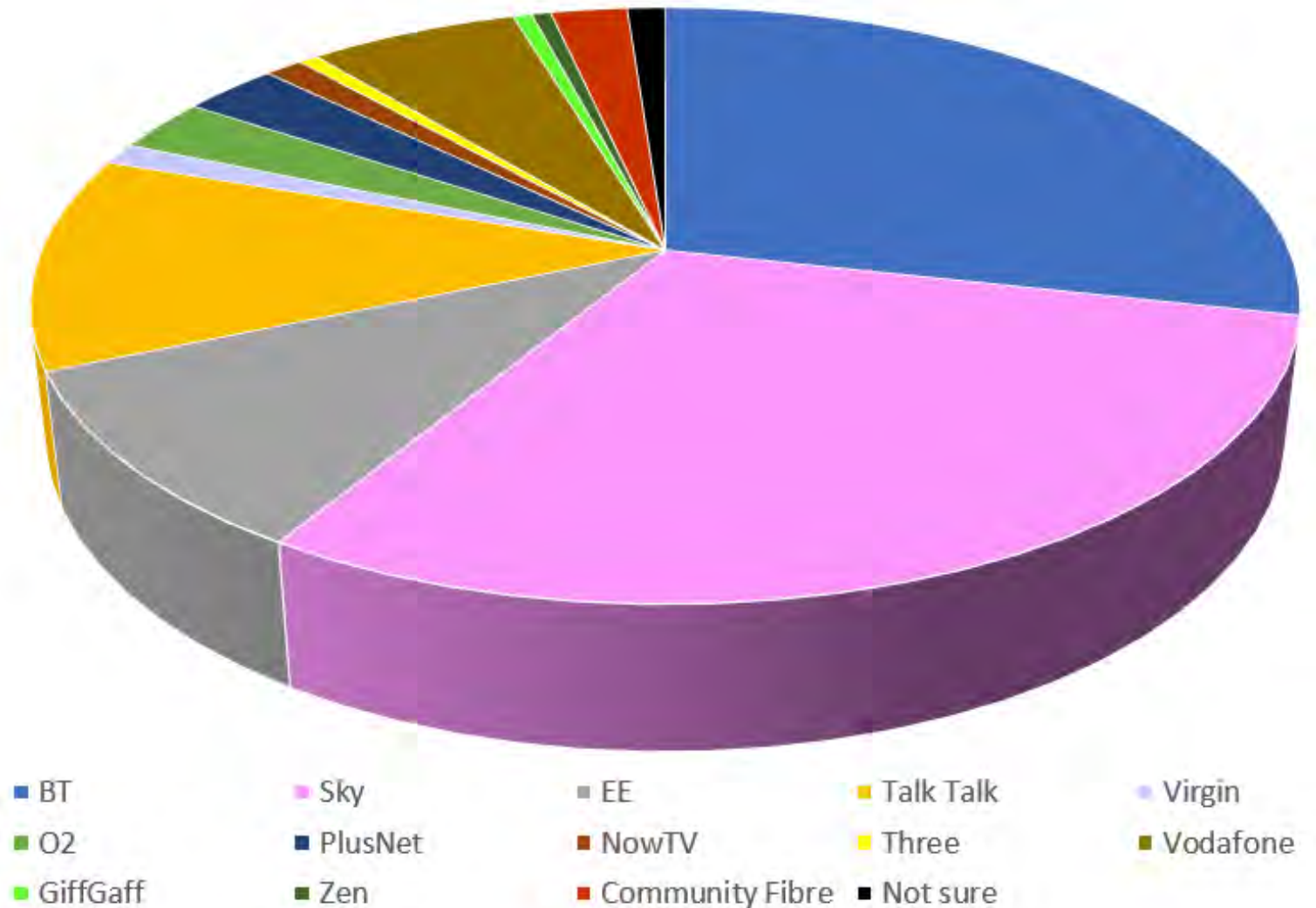
Sky had the greatest share of digital connectivity, with BT close behind. TalkTalk and EE were joint third and Vodafone fifth.

All other providers were in small numbers but the results from the survey area demonstrated the range of providers residents had contracted with.

The general absence of cable (i.e. high-speed fibre) was clearly evident with only a small area of Rossiter Fields (the western end) having been cabled.

All other households were running off legacy BT infrastructure or from mobile phone networks, which are highly unreliable in this area.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS - SHARE OF CONNECTIVITY



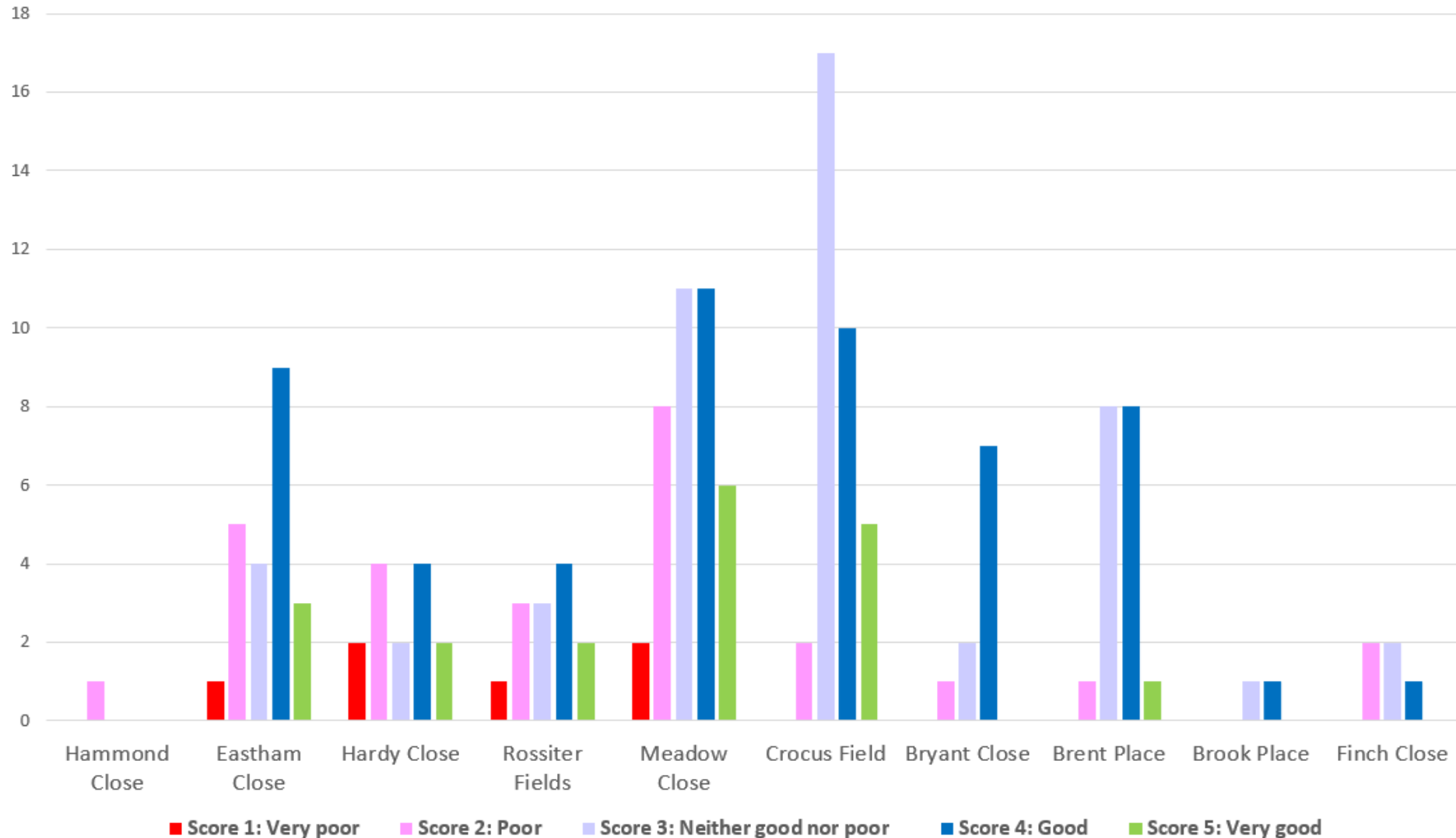
SURVEY RESULTS: WIFI PERFORMANCE

Eastham Close, Hardy Close, Rossiter Fields and Meadow Close were the only roads to report “Very Poor” connectivity. “Poor” was a consistent experience in all roads except Brook Place.

“Very good” was reported in six roads (i.e. in the larger roads).

In three roads, the majority of residents reported “Good” connectivity with another four roads reporting “Good” and “Neither good nor poor” as a majority experience.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
WIFI PERFORMANCE OF HOUSES RESPONDING TO SURVEY



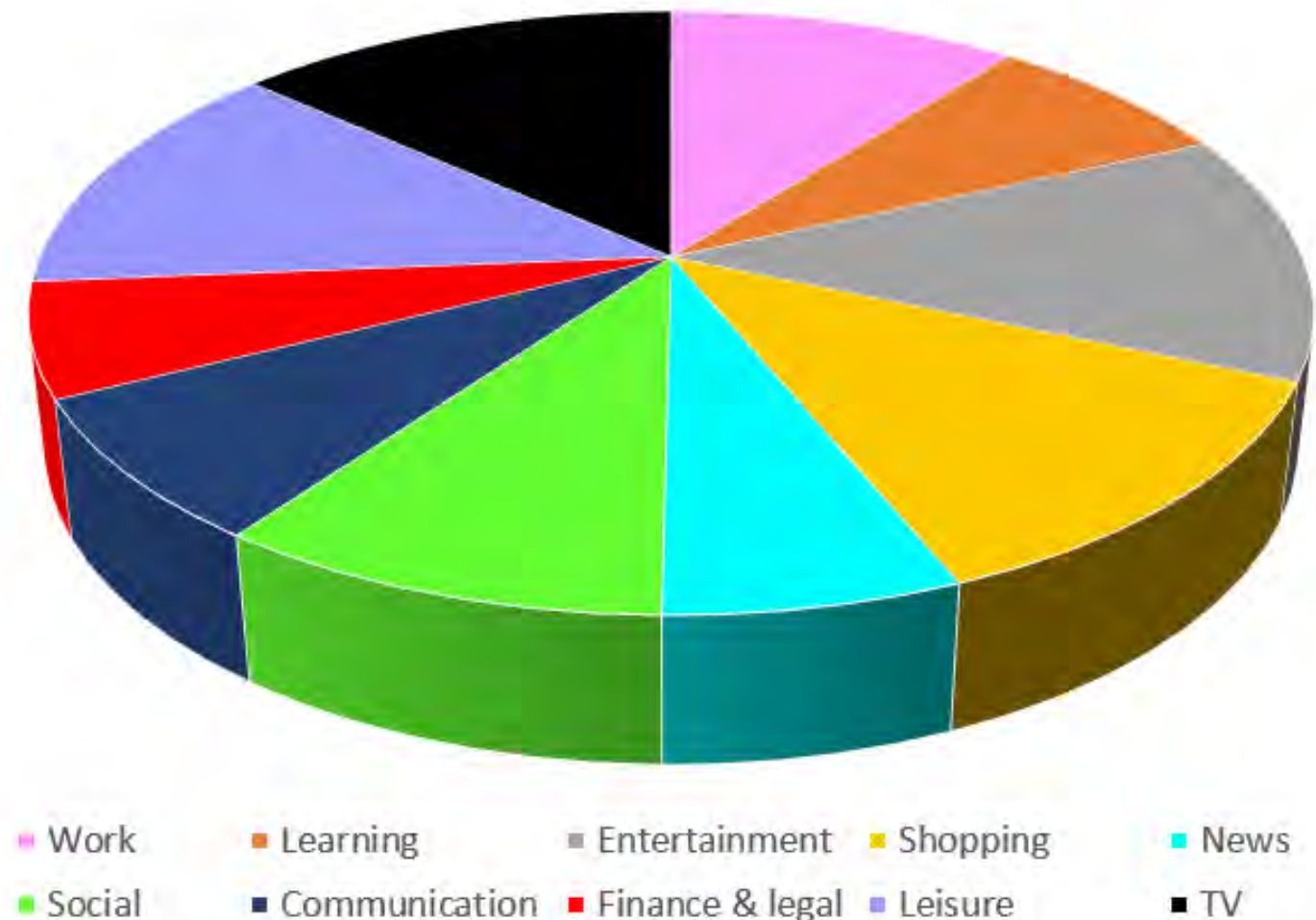
SURVEY RESULTS: INTERNET USAGE

The survey collected data which highlighted a variety of internet uses. In particular, the survey measured usage which influences digital exclusion such as work, learning, finance, shopping and communications:

- Work (11 households)
- Learning (8 households)
- Finance (6 households) – the Survey Team noted that some were wary of security issues with online banking
- Communications (8 households)
- Shopping (12 households)

The most prevalent usage was in leisure, TV and entertainment (13 households each), with social media not far behind (10 households). News was the joint lowest usage (6 households) – the assumption here was that most got their news from normal television programmes rather than specifically online.

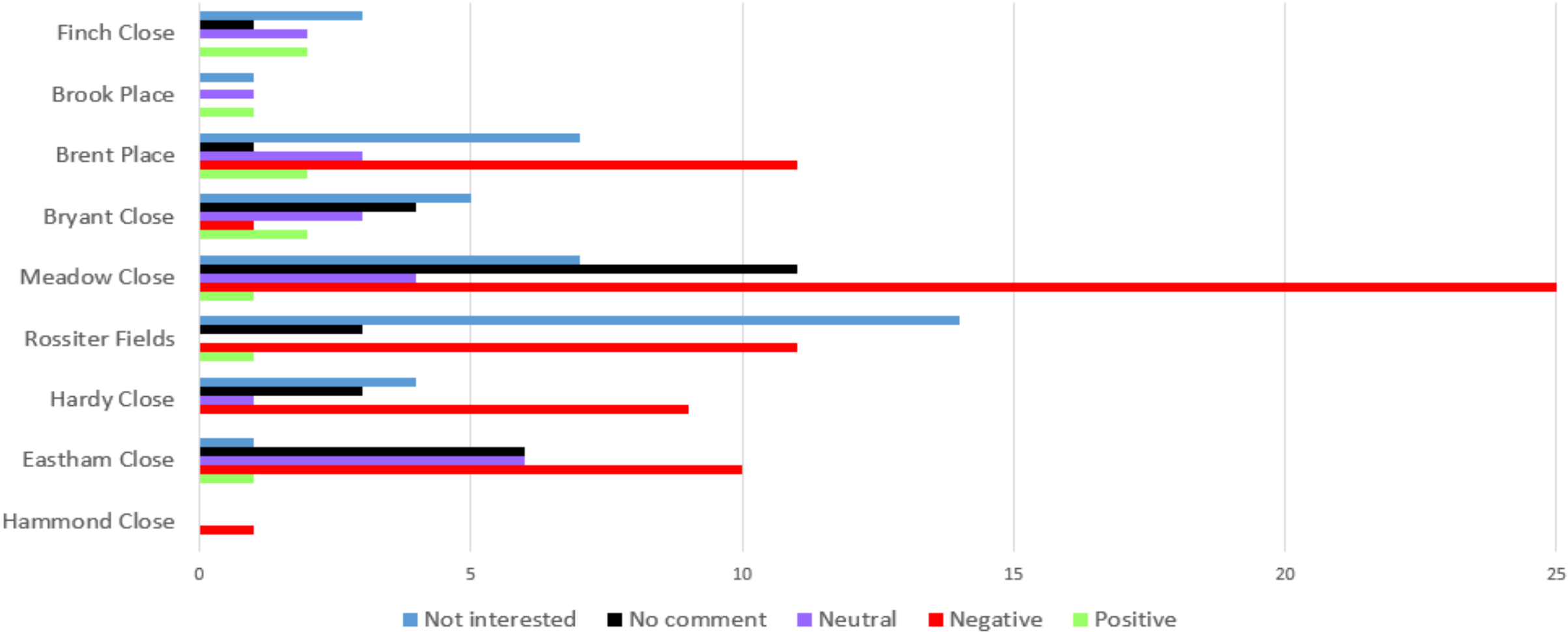
DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
INTERNET USAGE - BY TYPE (%)



SURVEY RESULTS: TYPES OF COMMENTS

A high level of negative comments were recorded in most roads. Positive comments were in the minority.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS (BY TYPE & BY ROAD)



SURVEY RESULTS: COMMENT THEMES

Connectivity was the focus of most residents' comments, 95 were negative and 28 positive. Of these, residents commented more specifically on two issues – cost and level of service of providers.

Cost was an issue for 27 residents and 11 had concerns about the level of service they had received by their providers. A level of interest in high-speed fibre was recorded for 13 residents.

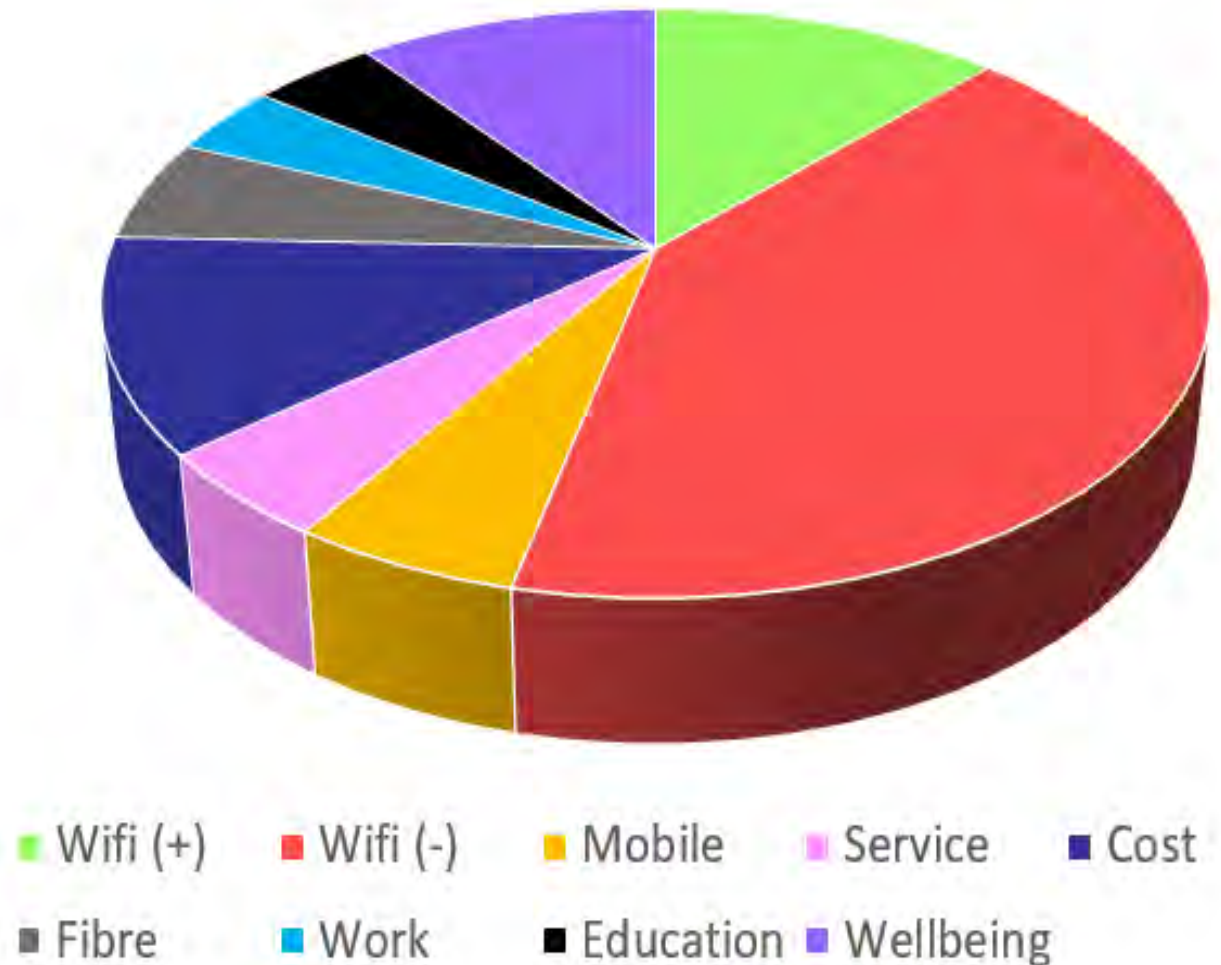
Three themes examined the importance of having an improved broadband signal:

- For work (9 residents)
- For education (10 residents)
- Improving general wellbeing / less stress (24 residents)

Of residents who were recorded using mobiles to connect to digital services, 13 expressed very negative comments about the lack of mobile signal across all providers.

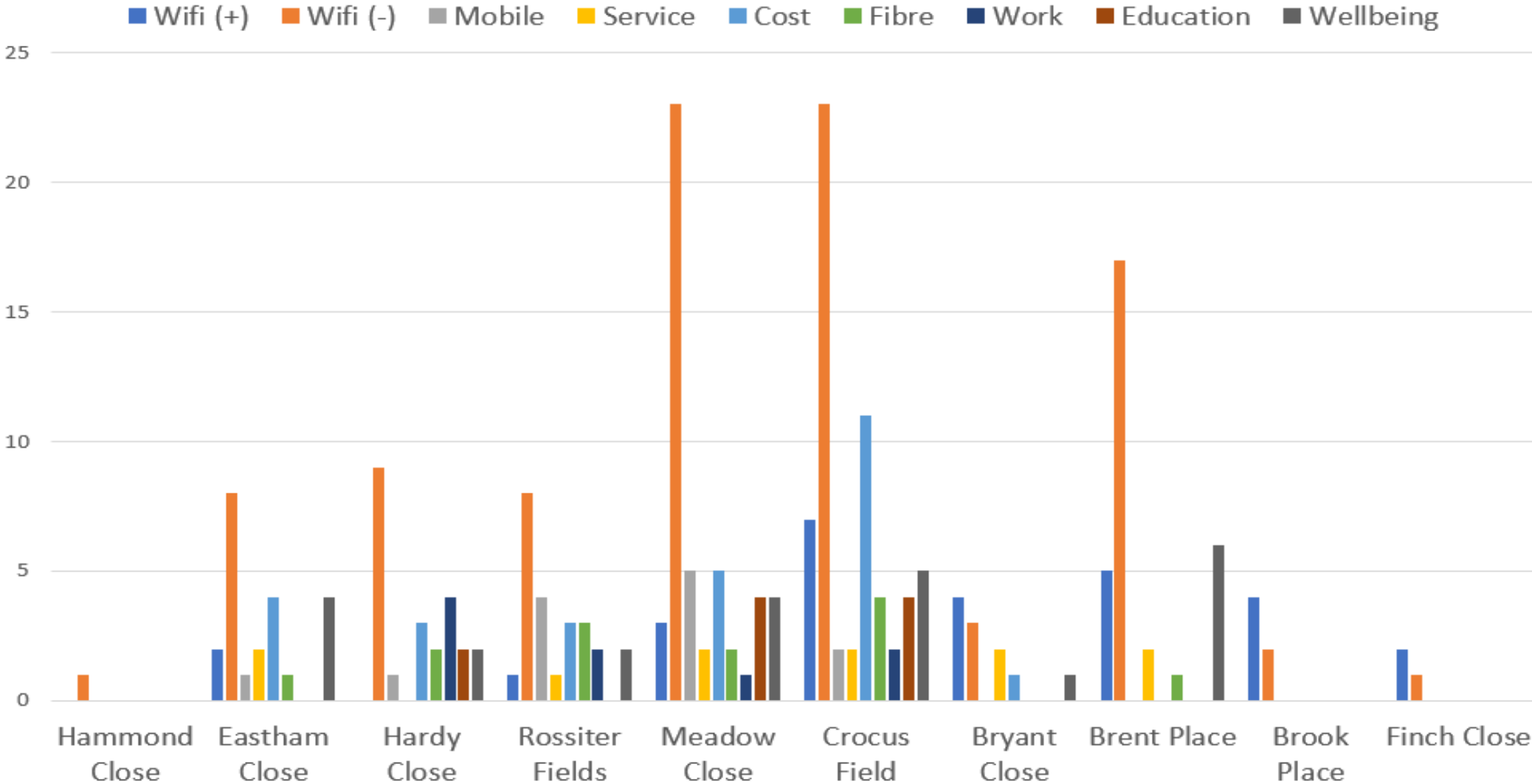
The table on the next page shows the breakdown of comment themes by road.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
COMMENTS (BY THEME)



SURVEY RESULTS: COMMENTS

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
COMMENTS (BY THEME, BY ROAD)



DOLLIS VALLEY: COMMENTS - CONNECTIVITY

A summary of the comments made about connectivity. The most frequent was “Needs improving” (29 responses). Size of the comment mirrors frequency of the comment when recording responses.



DOLLIS VALLEY: COMMENTS – BENEFITS OF IMPROVED CONNECTIVITY

A summary of the comments made by residents if they were to have improved connectivity. Most frequent were the negative comments “Less cost” (27 responses) and “Less stress & frustration” (13). The remainder were positive, “More productive & efficient” was the most prevalent (10). Size of comment mirrors the frequency of the comment.



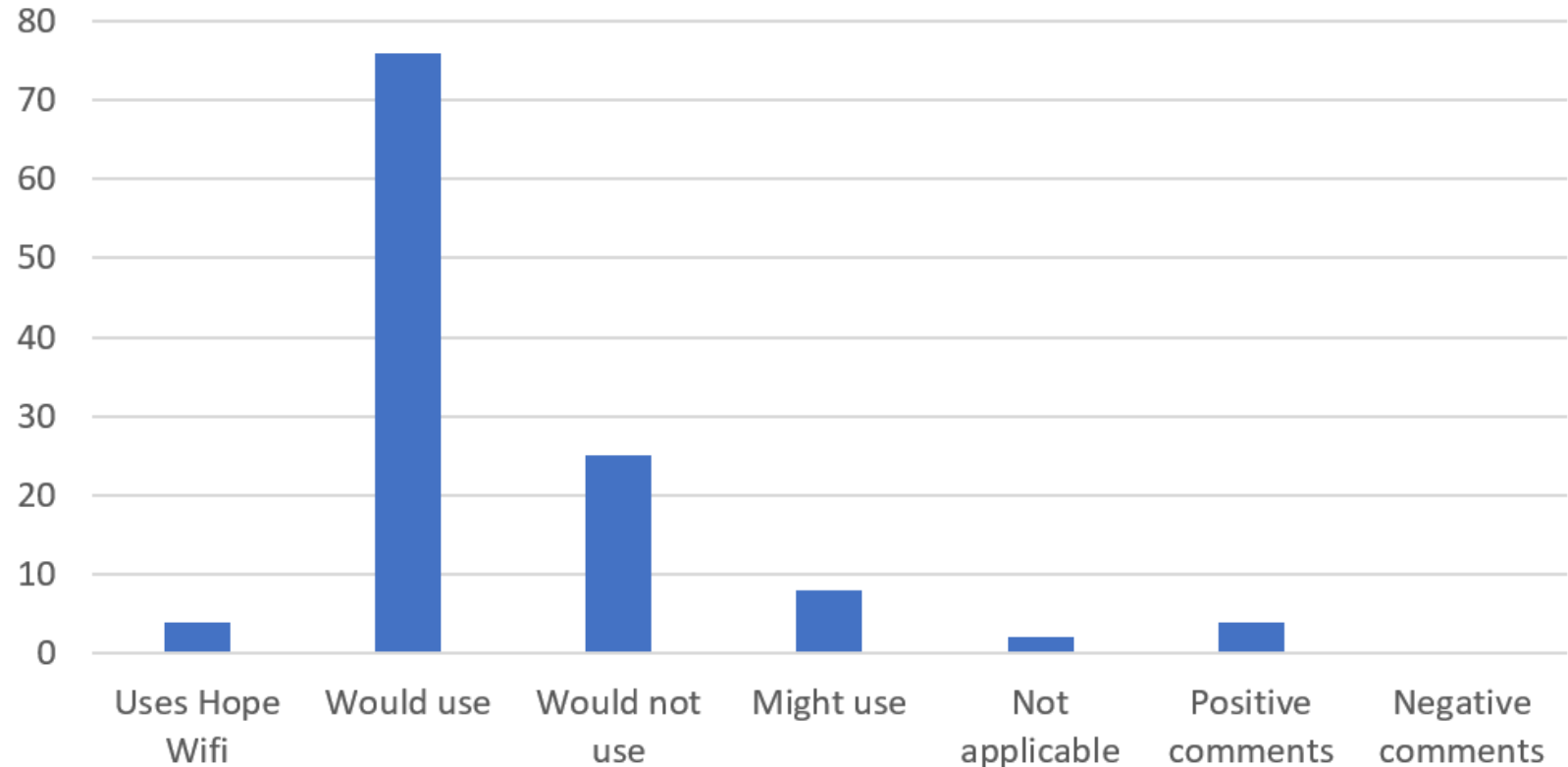
DOLLIS VALLEY: POTENTIAL USE OF HOPE CORNER WIFI

Residents responded favourably to the availability of high-speed Wifi, at Hope Corner Community Centre (provided by Community Fibre).

Four residents already use the centre and 76 said that they would use it in the future, especially if their connections either not working or were very poor. A further four residents made very positive comments about the availability of this service.

Reasons for not using the centre were mainly made by residents who were not experiencing problems with connectivity or who were at work during the day.

DOLLIS VALLEY ESTATE LEGACY HOUSING:
HOPE CORNER - POTENTIAL WIFI USAGE



DOLLIS VALLEY: OBJECTIVES OF THE DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY SURVEY

WERE THE OBJECTIVES MET?

1. Residents' overall digital experience was recorded. A fair level of detail was reported around connectivity and service reliability. How residents use and rely on digital connectivity was comprehensively captured.

Some data was recorded on barriers to more or better use of digital services, with the residents' overall response to needing improvements to connectivity and infrastructure.

2. Sufficient empirical data was collected, which can be sent to London Borough of Barnet and service providers.

An unsatisfactory level of digital exclusion was evident from residents' experience, particularly with those being unable to work from home or having difficulties with accessing educational services.

A high level of frustration from the majority of residents' digital experience was clearly captured.

Sufficient data and comment was generated to demonstrate the level of need for improvements in connectivity and infrastructure.

From feedback taken, it was evident that a good improvement in residents' digital experience would benefit them in the following areas:

- Health and wellbeing;
- Financially through greater options in employment and education;
- Socially, through better connections with family and friends.

The survey confirmed the lack of high-speed fibre in the area (except for a handful of households in Rossiter Fields) and very poor mobile phone coverage in all areas.

3. Promotion of the availability of fast, community Wifi connection at Hope Corner (provided free to residents) was achieved through positive face-to-face interaction with the Survey Team and Hope Corner leaflets.

DOLLIS VALLEY: LEARNING FROM CARRYING OUT THE SURVEY

LEARNING

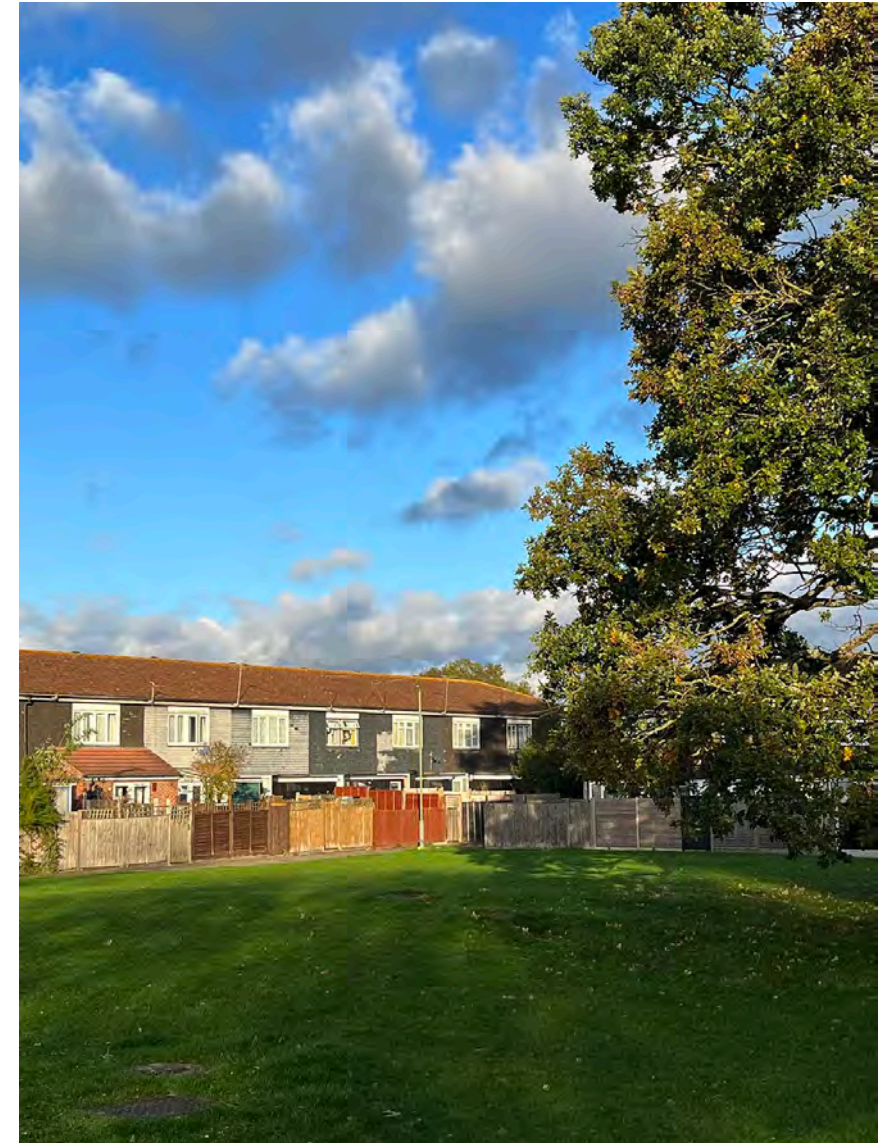
Polling of residents was more difficult than anticipated. This was due to:

- (a) A large percentage of residents were absent when the Survey Team called.
- (b) None of the residents absent responded to the flyer to contact Hope Corner with digital details.
- (c) There was a difference in residents' willingness to engage with the survey (i.e. some roads were easier to survey than others).
- (d) Households in two roads were not accessible to the Survey Team (52 households in total).

Of residents who responded, most were positive in their interaction with the Survey Team. They were also positive about Hope Corner Community Centre, especially those who were unaware it existed.

Not all residents were negative about their digital experience, with some being very positive.

The survey confirmed that Cost was a major concern among residents who responded.



DOLLIS VALLEY: DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- Improvement in telecoms infrastructure is rapidly needed, especially with the changeover to digital landlines required by the end of 2025.
- While the survey showed that there was a mixture of digital experiences, most responses were mainly negative or neutral and expressed dissatisfaction with poor and fluctuating connectivity.
- The main comment from residents about their overall digital experience was **frustration** and **stress**, some of which was related to poor customer service.
- There is an urgent need to remedy the mobile dead zone that exists in Dollis Valley.
- Cost of digital connectivity and services was a major factor with many residents.
- Hope Corner plays a key role in the short and medium term by providing residents with free access to a reliable, high-speed Wifi connection and offering up complementary digital services.

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

- Cost.
- Lack of knowledge about providers.
- Confusion about digital connectivity offers from providers.
- Poor engagement and customer service from providers which made residents unwilling to make a change.
- Hassle in changing providers.



DOLLIS VALLEY: DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY SURVEY GOING FORWARD

NEXT STEPS

- Send presentation to the Digital Inclusion Team and feed it into the digital inclusion strategy for this part of Barnet.
- Share presentation with other relevant stakeholders internally and externally of London Borough of Barnet with a view of raising awareness and informing:
 - (a) Plans for digital development of the borough;
 - (b) Plans for economic improvement and employability in the borough;
 - (c) Strategy for Barnet residents' wellbeing.
- Engage with Community Fibre (and other providers that the council are partnering with) to develop and implement plans to upgrade the existing telecoms infrastructure by integrating high-speed fibre to households on Dollis Valley.
- Introduce Wifi options for residents which are reliable, low cost and, in some cases, free (through means testing).
- Engage with London Borough of Barnet and suitable providers in planning a solution to the mobile network dead zone that exists in Dollis Valley and the wider area of Underhill.
- Introduce new services and develop existing ones in this geographical area which support digital awareness and increase engagement and learning for residents who are less tech savvy and have low confidence in using digital devices.
- Find suitable providers and venues to host digital learning sessions.



Community Fibre

